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GREAT CONTEST ON PASSAGE OF WEST SIDE RAILROAD BILL.

End of the Railroad Controversy—Oregon
Politics—Democratic Reputation
Platform, Disgraceful to the State,
Dangerous to all Public Interests,
and Damaging to the Credit of our Rail-
road Bonds, Etc., Etc.

WASHINGTON CITY, D. C.,
April 29, 1870.

Editor Oregonian:

Oregon is ahead. The West Side
Railroad bill to-day passed both Houses
of Congress, the first and only land
grant bill passed this session, or likely
to for several months. As the pioneer
of the land grant fight and representa-
tive of the land grant policy, it de-
serves more than a passing notice. For
nine long weeks we have labored to
reach a vote on the measure in the
House, and the success with which we
have been held back by the enemies of
land grants, shows their strength. But
the accumulating forces to-day bore
down all opposition and reached the bill
on the "Table." Holman, Dem. of
Indiana, had the floor, and with Fer-
nando Wood, used up their hour in set
speeches, violating their agreement to
let Mr. Smith explain the bill. By
arrangement, Fitch of Nevada, was to
make the leading speech in favor of the
land grant policy, which he did elo-
quently and ably, speaking forty min-
utes. The floor was then given to Mc-
Cormick, Dem. of Mo., for three min-
utes to state the position of the Land
Committee in favor of the bill; then
ten minutes to Smith to answer ques-
tions. It being near five o'clock when
Smith got the floor, and the House be-
coming impatient, although by general
consent he was authorized to take his
own time to explain, yet feeling the
great importance of reaching a vote
before an adjournment, which would
have defeated us, he called the previ-
ous question. Speaker Blaine rapidly
pressed the vote, first by acclamation,
then by "divisions," then by "tellers,"
and finally by the ayes and noes, and
when it was finally apparent that we
had the House, then commenced the
side fights. Greater excitement had
never been seen on the floor before and
no words of mine can portray the in-
tense feeling of nearly two hundred
members, all talking, most of them on
their feet, and many in hot blood. The
irrepressible Ingersoll was pitching into
Sam Cox; Beck was pitching into
Trimble, his colleague; Wilson, of Min-
nesota, was firing away at Holman;
Smith, of Iowa, was tearing away at
Hawley, of Illinois (both members of
the Land Committee); Maynard was
gesticulating mildly at the whole Demo-
cratic side; Sargent was firing away
at all the opposition generally; Root
of Arkansas, was rallying his South-
ern friends, while Eldridge, of Wiscon-
sin, with oaths both loud and deep,
and clenched fist, was denouncing his
Democratic friends as miserable faction-
ists. It was plain that the West Side
bill was not on trial, but the two hun-
dred other Land Grant bills, donating
one hundred millions of acres, for 20-
000 miles of railroad, and looking to
the investment of a thousand million
dollars, regarding this as a test vote,
had precipitated all their force and fire
into the contest. But the battle was
brief under the operations of the previ-
ous question, and the Speaker soon
announced the final result 97 for the
bill and 69 against it.

Senator Williams

In this letter I desire to say a word
personal of Senator Williams. No mat-
ter what may have been heretofore said,
just so requires me to say that he has

labored faithfully for the interests of
Oregon on this question. Senator Will-
iams has occupied a very difficult and
embarrassing position; and in the heat
of this railroad controversy, and under
the pressure of the pecuniary interests
of men engaged in these railroads, his
motives have not gone unquestioned.
A different feeling, or state of affairs
could not have been expected. But
now that the battle is over, and both
enterprises are fairly successful, mainly
by his labors, we should not hesitate to
do him full and complete justice. For
myself, I am now entirely satisfied that
he has acted conscientiously in the mat-
ter, and to the best of his judgment
and his ability; and although we did
not agree as to what was right and best
for the West Side interest, yet his
proposition is doubtless the best thing
we could secure under the circum-
stances. Many persons in Oregon
think it a very easy job to secure a rail-
road land grant. It is the very reverse.
It is the most difficult piece of legisla-
tion in Congress; and anything less
than the most careful management, and
untiring efforts, will result in failure.
To such management and to such ef-
forts, Senator Williams superadded all
his political influence (and I tell you
that is a power here) and he deserves
well of our people without distinction
of party. It is an unusual thing for a
Senator to leave his seat in the Senate,
and go into the House as lobbyist; but
Senator Williams did that kind of work
(and so did Mr. Corbett); and had it
not been for such efforts, the bill would
have hung by the ears until July, and
probably never reached a hearing in-
stead of being, as it is, the first and
only land grant bill yet passed at this
session.

Rivalry Ended.

I trust I have said enough on this
subject; but not more than candor and
justice demanded. And I also sincerely
hope this railroad contest between the
East and West Side may now have an
end. It has been productive of evil,
and evil only, although the contest was
unavoidable after the organization of
the Salem Company. With the disor-
ganization of the East Side Oregon
Central, all incentive for West Side op-
position to the East Side enterprise was
removed, and has ceased in fact so far
as I know.

Arrangements have been made here,
which, if properly encouraged by the
people on the line of the road, will se-
cure the early completion of the West
Side road. And I may also state that
the North Pacific road, to the interests
of which Senator Corbett has devoted
his attention this session, is now a cer-
tainty.

Oregon Politics.

As there seems to be a necessity for
every man to speak out for the right at
this time, you must excuse a few words
on the political situation in Oregon. I
have carefully read the proceedings and
platform of the late Democratic
State Convention in Oregon, and must
confess to both surprise and astonish-
ment at the depth of the "pit" it was
necessary to sink in order to reach the
"Bed Rock." It is dangerously low
down, and if there is any other place
lower it is certainly not to be reached
through a political convention. What
do the Democratic leaders in Oregon
mean? Their so-called platform has
been repudiated by ninety-nine hun-
dredths of their party in the nation,
and its only representative among the
seventy-eight Democrats in Congress,
is the notorious Mungen.

To strip the Albany platform of the
glittering and senseless generalities and
bungling verbiage with which it is be-
clouded, it resolves itself into two propo-
sitions. First, The civil and political
disfranchisement, and the indirect en-
slavement of the enfranchised colored
people. Second, The repudiation of
the national bonds.

All over the Northern States, and in
most of the South, the sensible leaders
of the Democracy are accepting the
situation in good faith and treating the
colored people, before the law, as the
Constitution treats them; and it is a
matter of deep regret that the free
State of Oregon, alone, should now
produce a political convention that sets
up a howl for the restoration of the
good old days when demoralized fathers
could sell their own daughters into
slavery and prostitution, and when the
slave driver, with his bloody insignia
of the lash and the branding iron,
could cry his horrid trade under the
shadow of the nation's capital and
flout his cruel flag in the face of the
Goddess of Justice. Thomas A. Hen-
driks, of Indiana, certainly the ablest
and wisest of the Democratic states-
man, came out in a public speech a few
days ago, and advised his party to unite

with all citizens, to secure to the ne-
groes the legal and equitable fulfill-
ment of the 14th and 15th amendments,
and his position is generally approved
by the Democratic press; while the
Democratic Legislature of Maryland is
making haste to provide equal educa-
tional advantages to colored children.
If there is anything secured by "as-
surance made doubly sure," it is the
civil and political rights of the negroes;
and it is only the "gnawing of a file"
to fight against it now. Revolutions
never go backward, and this legislation
for the black man cannot be undone.

"No! as well the tall
And pillar'd Alleghany fall—
As well Ohio's giant tide
Roll backward on its mighty track."

Of course the same rebel "spirit"
which would attempt to undo the polit-
ical results of the war to crush the re-
bellion, would refuse to pay the ex-
penses of the war. But we ought to
expect a little common sense, a little
"method in their madness" on this
point, inasmuch as it relates to the
practical matter of dollars and cents.
But if these Democratic leaders can ex-
plain their "equitable adjustment" the-
ory to any audience of Oregon voters,
without either proving themselves to be
fools, or that they have measured their
hearers to be such, then they are en-
titled to a point. "That to relieve
the country and restore its prosperity
we favor an equitable adjustment of
the bonded debt of the United States;"
and it is quite plain, says Mr. Huma-
son, that don't say repudiation. But
it does, for all that, and now let us an-
alyze it. To carry out this Democratic
adjustment, Congress must needs pass
a law, declaring that we owe but fifty
per cent. of the bonds, (as that is the
amount which I presume is deductible
from the words, "increased more than
two fold," used in the same section of
the platform with the adjustment
clause); and calling on the bondhold-
ers to come forward, and be severally
adjusted, and take their money. The
Democrats leaders don't propose to
pay any more interest, and therefore,
like the bankrupt trader, they would
have the nation pay down one half and
call it square. To do that, we must
raise in cash, about thirteen hundred
millions, and to withdraw which im-
mense sum from the circulating medi-
um of the world and concentrate it in
one place, would, of itself, produce a
financial crash throughout Europe and
America. The Treasury has generally
about one hundred millions available,
and would therefore have to borrow
nearly the whole of this vast amount.
How would you borrow? Give your
note—give new bonds, bearing interest,
because the Government could not get
it in any other way without confisca-
tion. Where would you borrow?
Here are your bondholders in response
to your call, from the four quarters
of the globe and the very ends of the
earth—widows and orphans, life insur-
ance, annuity and trust funds of every
description, answering to your Demo-
cratic "adjustment," and ready to ac-
cept your fifty per cent. and go home
and reflect on the gratitude of Repub-
licans. But you have no money, and
then, sirs, when you ask for it, in ex-
change for new bonds, or in any other
way, you will be told, amid the gibes,
jeers, contempt and execration of all
mankind, that you have repudiated
your contract, you have dishonored your
own paper, and if you will do that once,
you will again, and you can have no
money, except on a gambling specula-
tion—ten cents on the dollar for your
new bonds; and to raise fifty per cent.
of the present debt, it would cost the
government five or ten times what we
now owe. And the same depreciation
of the bonds and multiplication of the
present debt would occur if the Gov-
ernment offered to replace the fifty per
cent., or any other amount less than
par, or any other form of pretended
payment. Does any one doubt such a
result? If so, let him repudiate fifty
per cent. of his own note, and see how
much credit he will gain by it. That
is the inevitable result of the Demo-
cratic "adjustment" scheme, and no
man can disprove it.

Actual Repudiation.

Now for the repudiation part of it.
The bonds of the United States were
sold by its fiscal agent, Jay Cooke, who
disposed of them to banks, bankers,
trustees, corporations, and private indi-
viduals of every rank and station, and
received for them from ninety-five per
cent. to par in currency, which was
paid into the Treasury. The transac-
tion between Mr. Cooke and the pur-
chasers of bonds was a straight-for-
ward business transaction, just as he is
now selling North Pacific Railroad
bonds, in which a fair price was paid

for the bonds, and no man can now dis-
pute it. Since the original transaction
most of the bonds have change hands
at from 87 to 98 cents in gold, and I
question if one-fourth of them are now
held by original purchasers, and this
fourth is made up of trust funds for
charitable and benevolent societies, and
widows and orphans, whom to despoil
of their incomes, honestly accruing,
would be no less a crime than to steal
the bread of charity from the hands of
orphan children. To summon all these
bondholders now to take fifty per cent.
for their bonds, would be actual repud-
iation of that much of an honestly
contracted debt, and no amount of the-
ory can make anything else out of it.

That the Government was swindled
out of vast sums of money during the
war, there can be no doubt; and that
the suppression of the rebellion cost
twice as much as it ought, may be
readily admitted; but it was neither
the purchasers or the holders of these
bonds who did the swindling, or in-
creased the cost of the war. The
swindling was done by parties who al-
ways gain by war, and who received
from the Treasury the good money they
honestly and patriotically paid in
by the people who took the bonds for
their cash, in order to save the na-
tion from total destruction; while the
increased cost of the war, if I mistake
not, resulted from the action of North-
ern Democrats, who went around howl-
ing, "you can't whip 'em," thus encour-
aging the rebels to prolong a bloody
and hopeless contest. And such is the
case in all civil wars. They cost more
than wars of conquest. It is impossi-
ble now to reach the swindling con-
tractors and punish them for their
crimes; but it is some satisfaction that
the law requires secession sympathiz-
ing Democrats to pay their share of a
debt they helped to pile up.

Paying the Bonds.

I know it will be said these bonds
were purchased with greenbacks worth
only fifty cents on the dollar. That
may be true, and yet it does not affect
either the legal or equitable obligation
of the nation to pay the bond as it
stands. The currency was depreciated
by the enemies of the country, not by
its friends. Depreciation was a munition
of the enemy as much as powder
and shot, and what was worse, it was
used by the enemies in our midst. The
purchasers of bonds had every incen-
tive to appreciate the currency and hold
it up to a gold standard, just as green-
backs went down, the Government
went down and everything else calcu-
lated to secure the investment in bonds.
The bonds were offered to the public—
to everybody—not to the few. It was
a fair open contract of sale. The Gov-
ernment was beleaguered by enemies
on land and sea, at home and abroad,
and in our own councils; and there
was great danger in advancing any
money on the bonds. Those who did
buy the bonds run the risk, and showed
their confidence and patriotism, and
aided the Government to put down its
enemies. Pay, Grover & Co. certainly
did not aid in that way. They were
of the party who declared, "you can't
whip 'em," or like the old bed rocker
of Polk, aided the rebels by declaring
"a cord of greenbacks not worth a
whoop in hell;" and it is not their
province now to dispute the bonds sold
to the nation's friends in open market,
unless they will first go over squarely
and range themselves under the banner
of Jefferson Davis. It was by reason
of this very money, advanced by the
bondholders, that the rebellion was
crushed, peace restored, and the cur-
rency and bonds brought nearly up to
the gold standard. The bondholders
thus honestly made money by their
risk, but because they made money you
can't turn round on them and rob them.

An Argument for Oregonians.

Many years ago this same Govern-
ment passed a law contracting to give
every family six hundred and forty
acres of land in Oregon if they would
go there and settle on it. Many thou-
sands of hardy pioneers from the West-
ern States came to Oregon and closed
the contract with the Government.
They took some risk of Indians, etc.,
but now they all have fortunes in their
lands and beautiful homes. What
think you, Oregon farmers, of a politi-
cal party which would now say, that
because we, who came to Oregon at a
later day, can only get one-fourth as
much land as you did, and that in the
mountains and brush, therefore we fa-
vor an "equitable adjustment," of the
land estates in Oregon, so that you old
Donation claimants must surrender to
the rest of us, or the public, three-
fourths of your land? There is a fairly
parallel case, in every respect. The

(Concluded on fourth page.)

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